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THE SCHOOL OF RITSUO

O GAWA RITSUO, a Samurai of Kuwana, in the province of Ise, renounced the career of arms to give himself up to art. He was born in 1662, and died at Yedo (now called Tokio) in 1746. He was a painter, sculptor, faïencier and lacquerer, not to mention that he had been renowned as a tactician and swordsman.

The lacquers of Ritsuo are from his own designs, while most of the artists in lacquer, except Korin, have more or less worked from designs painted by pictorial artists of some fame. The lacquers of Ritsuo frequently have incrustated decorations in relief on them, in faïence, ivory, pearl, tortoise shell, metal and gilded wood.

Like a true artist, he scorned precious metals, and produced the most striking decoration with materials which had no intrinsic value, and owed everything to their artistic merit. An okimono in the form of a falcon, in enamelled faïence and lacquered with low-toned gold over the enamelling, now in this city, is a striking example of his art. The gold of Ritsuo, like the gold of Korin, would deserve a special study of itself, so full is it of novel and rare effects, and so capable of running through a whole gamut of sober but yet brilliant tones of reds, yellow, blue and green. This superb piece shows his mastery of delicate treatment of exquisitely graduated colors in faïence, enamel and lacquers.

Among those who became followers of his style must be mentioned especially Hauzan, Zeshin and Kenya for their lacs, and Hoitsu for his paintings.

T. TAKAYANAGI.

BABBLE OF THE BOULEVARD

(Special Correspondence of THE COLLECTOR)

THERE is nothing quite so attractive to the French, no story, novel or tale so popular, as that which treats of the war of 1870. Nearly every Frenchman, at some period of his life, has been a soldier; or, if he has not already served out the three years prescribed by the law, he sooner or later will be obliged to do so. The female, as well as the male sex are equally interested in the affairs of the army, and especially in the events incident to the struggle that terminated so unhappily in the fatal valley of Sedan. It is for this reason, perhaps, that Emile Zola has chosen for the subject of his last installment of the history of the Rougon-Macquart's the lurid scenes of the Franco-Prussian campaign. In short, the master of realism, who has already depicted for us the intrigues of the demi-monde, the degradation of provincial life, and the wretched existence of the Paris artisan, has now selected as his theme the horrors of war.

The author, who for almost twenty years has been formulating the scenes which he has at last woven together into a volume of four hundred pages, has done his work well. Zola is a worker. There is no doubt about that. If he wishes to describe the every-day life of the *cabarets* of the Batignolles, he goes there. He knows the garrets of Montmartre and the filthy cellars of La Villette. To accurately picture the surrender of the French—to which six chapters of his book are devoted—he has spent weeks on the plain of Sedan. The result is a magnificent descriptive account of the engagement. No other living Frenchman can make us so shudder at the brutal inhumanity of his characters as Zola. No other living author, not even John Ruskin, can describe with such a magical choice of adjectives the glorious suburban scenery, the flowers and grasses, the undulating fields of yellow corn or the vine-clad hills, as he who has twice been refused admission to the Academy.

Corporal Jean Macquart is the hero of Monsieur Zola's latest novel; and through his half-stupid bourgeois intellect we are enabled to observe the progress of the great struggle from its very midst, with the cannon's smoke strong in our nostrils and the shell whizzing by our ears. Like his comrades in arms, Jean is sanguine of the ultimate result of the war. It seems absurd that anyone should think of attacking France. With the others, he wants to push on to Berlin. The Emperor proposes to dispatch 400,000 men across the Rhine and surprise the Prussians before they are prepared for serious engagement. Austria and Italy could not restrain themselves from the support of Louis Napoleon directly the first few decisive victories were proclaimed. But after all this comes the reaction, the decimation and defeat of a disorganized, discouraged and dismembered army. Disaster is followed by retreat, famine and death, until the once idolized commander-in-chief is looked upon with contempt by the regiments of the line. "Foutre!" ejaculates Macquart as the Emperor rides past escorted by his *etat major*, "he must have a tough stone in his gut, that one." Whether or not the author of "L'Assommoir" will more firmly popularize himself by the publication of "La Débâcle" I scarcely dare to predict. As a picture of war it is superb. As a

chronicle of the irreparable loss and dishonor sustained by a great nation it will no doubt give rise to the bitterest of criticism.

That facts are stranger than Munchausenism is proven by a lawsuit at this moment being prosecuted in a Court of Justice not far from Paris. Late last autumn two sportsmen were hunting with their dog and guns in the forest skirting a neighboring village, when, but a few steps in advance of them, a rabbit emerged from his burrow with a copper coin in his mouth. The fowling pieces were aimed and fired simultaneously, both charges taking effect in the hide of the precocious quadruped. The object, which the animal still held clenched between his teeth, was extracted. It proved a rare specimen of sixteenth century money, bearing the half-effaced effigy of a bygone monarch and struck in 1585. As may be presumed, the astonished nimrods at once dispatched their dogs into an exploration of the burrow, the operation soon resulting in the discovery of more than one hundred silver and copper coins of great scarcity. Of course the occurrence was immediately noised abroad. But the delighted numismatics were made to regret the publicity given the affair by the proprietor of the property on which the rarities were found putting in a claim for the same. The decision of the court is now awaited with anxiety.

As the preceding paragraph is given on the authority of the *Figaro*, I cannot vouch for its unqualified veracity. One day an acquaintance of the editor of that journal observed to him: "Your paper is full of lies!" "Well, what of it?" returned Magnard; "the lies amuse you, don't they?"

To those who have had experience, satisfactory or otherwise, with American auctioneers, or who have either suffered or gained by their system of sale and commission, an idea of the manner in which public sales are conducted in Paris may prove interesting. There is in the French capital but one place, practically speaking, where antiquities, pictures, coins, books, autographs, furniture, etc., are disposed of under the hammer. It is at the Hôtel Drouot. The great mart, with its spacious galleries, while being under control of the Government, belongs in reality to the *Société des Commissaires Priseurs*, otherwise the Society of Auctioneers. The society is a corporation very much on the same order as the Chicago Board of Trade or the London Stock Exchange. By popular vote anyone is eligible to membership, though the initiation fee is placed at an exceptionally high figure. It follows, then, that each and every salesman connected with the establishment is a man of responsibility and good standing. The commissions are moderate, and, at the close of a sale, are divided equally between the auctioneer and the sinking fund of the association. There is no city in the world where so many auctions take place as in Paris. There are at least six or eight a day at the Hôtel Drouot alone. Too many, in fact, for any ordinary human being to keep the run of, much less attend. Their merit lies in the fairness of their conduction, and if you pay too dearly for a worthless article it is because your own personal discernment is lacking.

Monsieur Victorien Sardou, whose play "Thermidor" was suppressed by the Censure after three performances at the Théâtre Français, has done something that is almost without precedent in the annals of literature. From his stirring melodrama, which, by the way, Coquelin is now presenting in Austria, the dramatist has constructed a romance. What we are prohibited from witnessing on the stage we may buy at the book-stalls. It is but another illustration of the inconsistency of things in France. "*Le Roi est mort; vive le Roi!*" The book, which bears the same title as the play, and which is the second romance from the pen of the distinguished Academician, will make its appearance within a few months. Madeleine Lemaire illustrates the text.

For thirty years M. Sardou's particular passion has been the study of that most interesting portion of French history, the Revolution, and the collection of every object connected in any way therewith. Articles of costume, arms, curiosities, caricatures, newspapers dating from the last decade of the eighteenth century, are all welcome to Sardou provided they be authentic. The intimate knowledge thus acquired enables him, as it were, to transport himself back to the times of ninety-four, and has inspired him with an intense love of accuracy in all matters connected with his favorite study. Thus the costumes worn in "Thermidor" at the Français were historically correct, even to a button. The very cockades on the hats were the exact counterpart of those worn by the La Bussièrès and Martials of the period, and the crockery used in the breakfast scene was not a reproduction, but actually dated from the Reign of Terror. With his rich store of information regarding the subject in hand, M. Sardou cannot fail to produce a work not only of the highest romantic interest, but of direct historical value.

Apropos: "Thermidor" is not the only one of Monsieur Sardou's plays suppressed by the Censure. In March, 1873, the Government authorities promptly forbid the representation of a comedy, in four

acts, entitled "Uncle Sam," and in which the manner and character of the American people was satirized with an intense bitterness. It pleased the *boulevardiers* who happened to be present the first night, but touched as well the conservative policy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who, for diplomatic reasons, immediately caused its removal from the boards.

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Though there is little enough to interest the student of history in the fifth volume of the "Talleyrand Memoirs," its appearance at least merits attention. After much ado over Choiseul and the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Prince has some observations to make regarding the vulgarity and ill-breeding of Mme. de Pompadour, and a few words of praise for Du Barry, who, it is stated, readily accustomed herself to the manners of the court. Both were liars, and Du Barry had such complete control over the king that he dare not write or even dictate an official letter. She directed all the affairs of State, chose or expelled the ministry, and was, withal, a veritable power behind the throne.

PARIS, March 5, 1892.

JOHN PRESTON BEECHER.

NOTES AND NOVELTIES

A LOAN exhibition for the benefit of the Young Men's Christian Association brought out a rich collection of family and historical relics at Morristown, N. J., last month. Morristown is historic ground, and its old families are well provided with objects full of interesting hereditary associations. The old Morristonians were great travelers, too, and they brought back with them substantial evidences of their wanderings. Had the exhibition been properly advertised it would undoubtedly have attracted visitors from various parts of the State and from New York, for it is seldom so many things of historical, as well as intrinsic, value are brought together outside of the large museums. None of the articles shown had any connection with the display of antiques at Washington's headquarters, so that in every way the display was unique.

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A special department of the exhibition was devoted to a collection, occupying one entire corner, of over two hundred articles, and loaned by Mrs. J. Boyd Headley, of Morristown. Mrs. Headley is a direct descendant of John Alden, so that she had four ancestors in the 101, who formed the select society on the *Mayflower*. When her ancestors ceased to be Pilgrims and Puritans they became fighters. One narrowly escaped death in the massacre of Braddock's men during the French and Indian war. Another was the last man to be scalped by the Indians in Lucerne County, New York. Still another was one of the handful of fire-eaters who followed Mad Anthony Wayne in the forlorn hope at the Battle of Stony Point. She has everything in her remarkable genealogy but a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and one of her ancestors was a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly when the all-important document was given to the world. Naturally her collection was redolent of Colonial and Revolutionary memories. In it was shown her Pilgrim set of jewelry, which attracted so much attention at the Centennial Exposition in 1876. The set is made, by its designs, to serve as a sort of object history of her family, and is of most ingenious composition and workmanship. The spinning-wheel at which Priscilla sat when John Alden went to court her for doughty Miles Standish was conspicuous among Mrs. Headley's heirlooms.

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Another special feature was a collection of Paul Revere relics. These included paintings of the man who raised the battle-call for Lexington, and of his wife; one of the veteran General J. W. Revere, and a dozen medals won by him; silks and satins, beflowered and bedecked after the lavish fashion of a century ago, which were the dresses of the Revere ladies; Paul Revere's spectacles; a necklace and earrings given by the wife of Governor Bernard, of New Jersey and Massachusetts, to a member of the Revere family, and scores of other articles. Other interesting objects were a small carnelian cylinder, said to date back to the time of Abraham, loaned by Mrs. K. Twining; two ears of mummy corn raised last summer from seed taken from an Egyptian mummy, by Miss Olmstead; an embroidered flounce worked and worn by Margaretta Schenck at a reception given General Lafayette in 1825, loaned by Mrs. James Douglass; a beautiful gold comb and necklace ornamented with large classic heads of carnelian, which belonged to the Empress Josephine, loaned by Miss Nina Howland; a silk and gold thread scarf presented by the King of Siam to David King, the first European admitted to the Court of Siam, loaned by Miss Olmstead, great niece of David King; a handsome white porcelain cup and saucer, shell-shaped, with coral edge and gold-lined, which belonged to Napoleon I, loaned by Miss Howland; a dainty necklace of gold and glass beads and pearls, presented by Marie Antoinette to Martha Washington, loaned by Mr. R. W. Stevenson; a cream pitcher and sugar bowl, which belonged to Napoleon III, loaned by Mrs. Charles M. Marsh; a small white and blue pitcher, valued at \$2,000, said to be the first specimen of Wedgwood ware ever made; the dressing gown of Hien Fung, Emperor of China, taken from the summer palace of the Emperor in 1860, when the palace was sacked by the French, loaned by John E. Ward; an ostrich robe, from Mrs. J. H. Lidgerwood; a pair of pistols used by General Marion, of the Revolution; and a tanned human skin from inside the hand and arm of Antoine, the murderer of the Sayre family, who was hung in Morristown in 1832, loaned by A. W. Cutler. Contributors of other less grisly relics were Mrs. W. S. Poor, Mrs. George W. Howell and Mr. H. G. Ennell.

The incorporation is announced of the Columbus Memorial Company, of Chicago, with the purpose to collect autographs, memorials, etc., concerning the discovery of America. The capital stock is \$10,000, and Edward Rubovits, Tobias Rubovits and Levi Salomon are named as incorporators.

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On March 1 Mr. Clarence Winthrop Bowen read a paper before the New York Historical Society at the Library, Second avenue and Eleventh street, on "Historical Notes on Original Portraits of Benjamin Franklin." The lecture was illustrated with stereopticon views, all taken from original photographs. The list of portraits which Mr. Bowen has traced is of exceptional interest.

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He finds that the first portrait—painted by Charles Wilson Peale in Philadelphia, in 1787—was disposed of at the Peale sale in 1854, and is now owned by Mrs. Joseph Harrison, of Philadelphia. This portrait represents Franklin at the age of 84. From it Peale made a mezzotint and inscribed it to Franklin. This mezzotint is exceedingly scarce and valuable. A French print in colors by P. M. Alix, published toward the close of the last century, is evidently a copy of it. One of Peale's prints is now in the possession of the Boston Public Library. There are others in pastel in the Virginia Historical Society and in the Old Colony Historical Society. A replica of Peale's portrait of Franklin and another, with some accessories, are in the possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the gift of James J. Barclay. There is a portrait in crayon by Mrs. Oliver Champlain, belonging to Mrs. Thomas S. Collier, of New London, Conn., and a pastel painted by Joseph Sifede Duplessis is owned by Hon. John Bigelow, of New York. This portrait was drawn in 1783, and was presented by Franklin to M. Louis de Veillard, his friend and neighbor at Passy. Another portrait of Franklin, by Duplessis, is owned by the Mutual Assurance Company in Philadelphia. It was painted in Paris in 1778, and came into the possession of the Mutual Company in 1876. In the Boston Public Library is another portrait of Franklin, by Duplessis, which was presented to the City of Boston by Edward Brooks. A Duplessis portrait of Franklin was obtained by James Monroe in Paris when he was United States Minister to France and is now owned by Mrs. Douglas Robinson, of New York. The late Henry Stevens, of London, owned another Franklin portrait by Duplessis, which is now in the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington. It was painted in 1782 in Paris. Mrs. Elizabeth Duane Gillespie, of Philadelphia, Franklin's great granddaughter, owns an original miniature of Franklin. By the artist it was given to Mrs. Franklin, from whom it descended to its present owner.

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Of portraits of Franklin painted by Jean Baptiste Greuze, one is deposited in the Boston Public Library, and was presented to the City of Boston by Gardner Brewer, in 1872. Another portrait attributed to Greuze is owned by the Boston Athenæum, and is deposited in the Museum of Fine Arts. It was secured in 1828. It was painted in 1778 for the Abbe Veni, and was purchased by Thomas Jefferson, and through his grandson, Joseph Coolidge, the Boston Athenæum got possession of it. Another portrait of Franklin, with a red coat and marked with the name of Baricolo, is thought to be after either Greuze or Duplessis. The portrait belonging to Mr. H. Pratt McKean, of Philadelphia, and purchased at the Peale sale, is the replica willed by Franklin to the Supreme Council of Pennsylvania, and the one belonging to the American Philosophical Society is a copy by Peale presented by the artist. John Turnbull and Edward Savage painted pictures of Franklin. They are owned by Yale University and the Boston Museum. A portrait of Benjamin Franklin, by Gainsborough, owned, in England, by the Marquis of Lansdowne, was painted about the time of the signing of the Treaty of Paris. Harvard University owns a portrait of Benjamin Franklin, which is said to have been painted in London when Franklin was 20 years old. Another picture, said to be the best ever taken of Franklin, was painted by Mason Chamberlain, R.A., and was reproduced in the French edition of Franklin's "Philosophical Papers." George Dunlop Leslie, R.A., made a copy of this portrait, and gave it to Harvard University. Robert Fulton painted a picture of Franklin which is now in the possession of Mr. C. F. Gunther, of Chicago. Among the busts of Franklin is one in the possession of ex-Mayor Hewitt, of this city, who vouches for its authenticity. This is by the celebrated sculptor, Houdon. There are others—one in the American Philosophy Society in Philadelphia, one in the Louvre in Paris and one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in this city. Mr. Lawrence Hutton, of this city, has a replica of the cast of Franklin's living face, believed to have been made by Houdon as a guide. Still other portraits, busts, medallions, etc., might be enumerated, but they are either of uncertain authenticity or authorship, or of inferior merit.

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The largest library in the world is that at Paris, which contains upward of 2,000,000 printed books and 160,000 manuscripts. Between the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg and the British Museum there is not much difference. In the British Museum there are about 1,500,000 volumes. The Royal Library of Munich has now something over 900,000, but this includes many pamphlets; the Royal Library at Berlin contains 800,000 volumes; the library at Copenhagen 510,000; the library at Dresden 500,000; the University Library at Göttingen, Germany, 600,000. The Royal Library at Vienna has 400,000 volumes; and the University Library in the same city 370,000 volumes. At Buda-Pesth the University Library has 300,000 books; the corresponding library at Cracow nearly the same number, and at Prague 205,000.]